94

Leicester, Mass. Dec. 20. 61.

Dear friend Webb,

Day before yesterday came to hand yours of Nov. 28th to me, and Nov. 29. to Ade., enclosing a note to McKim — also your account, and a Draft Bk. of Ireland on Bk. of England for £ 26.16.0 — I sent to you Nov. 26th (or 27th) my acct., and enclosed an Order on London for £ 18. 2. 2 ($90.54), being the balance due you. I did so, because I felt that you ought to have the money for the "John Brown Life" as soon as I could send it, and therefore lost no time in remitting, after receiving from Mr. Kim the amt. owed by him; and I had the impression that you would expect some acct. of me of the book (J. B.) pretty promptly, and wd. not send yr. acct. until you had that. — Having sent it, & the balce due, & now finding the same items included in your present account, I shall be somewhat confused in regulating matters, and shall not be able at present to make all the payments indicated in your account. — I shall have to ask some explanations of the account, also. Who is Dr. Bodichon? There appears £ 20. rec'd for him, & the same sum paid him; that is not of much consequence, indeed, as one balances the other. — Are the payments of Mrs. Palmer (£10.), Mrs. Allen (2 Richard) (£6), Mr. George Martineau (£2.2.0), Mr. Henry Turner (£1.1.0), Mrs. Harriet Martineau (£1.1.0), R. D. Webb (£3.) for the Subscription Anniversary? I suppose so, but it does not appear with certainty.

MS. B.L.6 v.6, p.94

The amt. of the ~~bill~~ draft sent by you (which I have not yet negotiated) at p^d 4.80 to the p^d £ will be 128.64 (I do not know whether I shall get quite that for it, or not.) – From that sum I can pay the Liberator (£ 6.19.0) 33.36
" Standard (£.13.3.2) 63.16 96.52
Leaving in my hands 32.12

But the aforenamed donations (Mrs. Palmer's, &c, &c.) amount to £ 25.4.0, or $120.96. –

The items included in my acc^t. and paid for by me (forwarded to you Nov. 27.), which are also included in yours to me, are for 160 Johnson Brown's life – 16.0.0
Forwarding do 13.0

This amt. therefore would be returnable viz. 16.13.0

There were also sundry items in my acc^t, amounting to 6.71, due to me; – (provided, i.e., as to one item, that you had sold the 10 photographs of John Brown I had sent you.)

– And then I was owing you $14. on Advocate acc^t., including a balance of $1.50 due you from McKim.

If I advert to the "freight" charge (April 16.), (18/2 – not the 3/10 freight from Liverpool) it is not, you will understand, by way of objection, but only because I fear you may have been charged a 2^d time for what was prepaid here. – Something may, indeed, have been sent to you from here, that I had no hand in, and the freight to you left unpaid – a neglect which I do not mean to be chargeable with myself.

Having thus disposed of the business topic, for the present, I find myself with very little time to write more, by this mail. — Ada. thanks you for yr. kind note to her; and I must take another opportunity to reply to your full note to me. — You must have got in some way an impression of a poorer state of health in myself than is the fact. It is true that I am more or less affected, and nearly all the time, with dyspeptic ailments. But I am able to do some work both physical & mental. I have just returned from a week's visit in Boston, where I was in unusually good health for me. Still, my strength does not return to me and I am very thin in flesh. On the whole, I incline to think I am gaining in respect to health; but if so, it is very gradual.

Thank you for 3 Dublin newspapers received. Last Monday we received the first intelligence of the English thundering about the Slidell & Mason affair. Your people have generally accused us (Americans) of being specially impulsive and hasty in our utterances; but I think no American precedent can be found to outdo this exhibition of English indignation. Without getting half the facts, or the ex-parte statement of the officers of the Trent (who, as we understand it, were very abusive & violent to the American officers, who, on their part, from the best information we have, con-

ducted themselves with coolness, judgment, a
civility, forbearing to retort the abuse heaped up
them,) and without waiting to consider the
International Law, or to look into the course
which the English Govt. & Nation has itself taken
heretofore in similar cases, the whole press, na
and Government of England seem to have come
the conclusion that, in taking the rebel envoy
from a neutral ship, the American captain an
his government were utterly without precedent
or justification. We universally understoo
it just the other way; and instead of thinking
an "outrage", we think it a just proceedin
fully warranted by the example of England herself, fu
sustained by her highest law authorities, which
cited & published in full; and instead of th
it a "folly", we deem it a right, and a duty,
intercept & take the officers, agents, & other mean
employed in furthering the rebellion against o
Government. A Queen's Messenger has arriv
here, with despatches to Lord Lyons. What the s
thereof is has not yet transpired. — Of course
the English Govt. & people want a war with Amer
they can probably have it; and their great hast
in this matter (taking their public journals as
the evidence) would seem to prove they do want
else, why not wait to know the stand which o

MS. Bill v. 3, p. 94

Government will take it in the affair? why not take the necessary time to look into the subject, and see what the law and practice of England hereof have been? This hot haste to decide, to demand, to issue Queen's proclamation prohibiting the export hither of Saltpetre, arms, lead, &c, to threaten a large additional military force to be sent to Canada, - and the thousand other menaces with which the British ministerial & other press teem, looks to me strangely like a determination to use the "Trent" affair as the pretext of a quarrel already desired & all but determined on. - I see some of the French papers interpret it as evidence of a purpose in the Eng. Govt. to take a favourable opportunity to break down the American nation, whose progress in wealth & power the last 40 years has been, they say, too rapid to suit the ideas of England. It looks so, I must say. I well remember how the English papers denounced the atrocious sentiment put forth some 10 or a dozen years ago by Irish repealers that "England's need was Ireland's opportunity." It was declared by them to be a most base and detestable sentiment. But what does England think of springing at our throat, now, when we already have our hands full in dealing with a wily, unscrupulous, and cruel foe, and that foe engaged in the up-building of a cause, to which England should be ashamed to lend one little of support? I must ask, dear friend Webb, what you think of this?

For this is the question. Will England take this "opportunity" to rush into a war with us, and so strengthen the Slaveholding Empire at a time, when, but for that aid, she must speedily despair of carrying out her oppressive plans?
— I do not allow myself to say all I think of England's course towards the United States, since the breaking out of this War; but I have been unspeakably astonished at it. At first, a just and righteous Proclamation of Neutrality was issued. But how has it been respected by English subjects? how enforced by the Government? It has been violated in your ports at home, continually, with knowledge of the public and of course of the Govt.; it has been violated in your provincial ports, with the same knowledge; great quantities of British goods, contraband of war, arms, ammunition, clothing, medicines, &c have been run into Southern ports in violation of the blockade (the blockade has been insufficient, that is true; but advantage was taken of the fact that our Navy, scattered & weakened as it was by the villainy of the last administration, could not thoroughly & at once blockade over 2000 miles of coast;) it has been violated by suffering the Rebel privateer "Nashville" (a vessel stolen from her owners, in part residing at the North) to enter & lie in an English harbour, after having seized & burned an American merchantship within a short distance of your coast, — and

instead of ordering her to sea, suffering her to remain in the harbour, & refusing to the Captain of the burnt ship the requisite authority to go on board the privateer to search for his own property, stolen from him & there believed to be in the privateer's possession.— And now this attempt of yours to take Rebel Envoys, in a manner strictly in accordance with established International law & England's own example, is to be made a cause of war!

It is true that we have had some scattered testimonies, here and there, in England, in behalf of the Northern States, and their cause of established government as against the Slaveholders' rebellion; but the vast mass of British speech, writing, and action has gone steadily & strongly for the South, and against the North. England may, and very likely will, temporarily succeed in this course. But assuredly the day is not far off, when she will bitterly rue it,— I believe so, at least. For remember, as between your Nation & ours, this is not a question whether the U. S. Government is, or should be, pro-slavery or anti-slavery. I freely admit, as an Abolitionist, the short-sightedness, the weakness, the folly, of the policy of our Government. But neither England nor any other nation has a right to make any condition for us of this sort. To speak plainly, it is none of their business whether, as a Government, we are antislavery or not. The Eng. Govt. made a treaty with us when we were not only just as pro-slavery as we are now, but a thousand times more pro-slavery,— when, in the

whole nation scarce a voice was raised against the iniquity of slaveholding;— when indeed, England herself was slaveholding. Will England observe her treaty-obligations, or not? That is the question. Will she observe them, or will she foment a rebellion against that nation, which openly pledged to a contrary course? It is not for England, as a government, to ask whether we are Antislavery, (as we should be,) or not— is it? The fulfilment of her obligations never was conditioned on any such basis, I think all will allow. We — as a Nation — have never asked aid of England nor any sort of participation with us in this war. Her absolute & honorable neutrality we did ask and expect, — and she freely promised it. But how has the promise been kept to the ear, and broken to the hope! I lament over this state of things, even more than I feel indignant. It but confirms what you & others have long told us — that Mr. S. J. May was so astounded to find was the case — that a rank, unqualified pro-slavery feeling was as prevalent and outspoken in England as in America. Nothing short of that can explain the amount of open and secret aid which this Slaveholding rebellion has, from the first, received from England — the utter coldness with which every Northern effort has been treated — the unconcealed joy and satisfaction and merriment at

entertained and expressed at
~~with which~~ the reverses of the Northern arms,
and the mistakes & shortcomings of the U.S. Govt.,
~~[illegible]~~. — And the London Times,
(I understand, for I have not myself seen this
giving out of that journal) takes the ground, now,
that the British Govt. will not be bound by the inter-
national rules and precedents which she has her-
self established, when they conflict with her interests!
I quote this, not as believing the Engl. govt. has ever
authorized any such statement or inference, nor
as believing it myself, but only that the baseness of the Times
may be apparent. Yet that was the paper to tell
us, of the North, that, if we would but take an
openly anti-slavery position we should have the
~~[illegible]~~ general sympathy of the English people!
Perhaps we should; and we ought to take that
position, whether we should, or not, have English sympathy, and we
ought to have taken it long ago; but I
presume the Times did not believe it, when it said
it; at all events, it has itself done all in its power
to give countenance & strength to the Slaveholders' side.
The Dublin paper, too, which you send me, plainly
tells Lord Palmerston that he must "resent the insult",
and break up the Southern blockade, and bring the
Southern cotton to the English market, — that, by so
doing, he will "add 50 per cent to his popularity"
— & that, otherwise, it will "not be worth two rows
of pins."

MS. Bill, v. 8, p. 74

I must say I never saw a meaner motive, or a weaker reason for action, held out to an government by any Class of papers - not even by the N. Y. Herald.

I fully allow that we are in danger of being, ourselves, one sided, and of not making due allowance for other people, parties, & their opinions. I have endeavored to keep cool, and I think I am. I do not disguise nor apologize for the follies & mistakes of our own Government, but speak of them plainly. But, so far as the Govt. is right, it deserves to be sustained, and we do cheerfully sustain it to that degree. What would James Haughton and you and others have had our government do, when the treacherous Slaveholders' rebellion broke out? Anything less than they did? They are not non-resistants, it is needless to say; should they sit still, and have the hand-cuffs applied, the gag forced into their mouths, and consent to be driven out of the seat of government, and allow the Slaveholders to walk in & occupy? Impossible for any one to ask, of course. But should the non-resistants require it of their government? That is a different question, and not perhaps as easily settled. Yet, it is plain, to me, that the non-resistants would have been nothing

less than the allies of the Slaveholders, to have taken any such ground. They felt it, saw it, knew it; and no non-resistant has allowed himself to be so befogged as to demand of the Government & people a practice in which (and which could not have been put in practice, without submission to every possible villainy!) neither of them had ever believed. The non-resistants, as well as the abolitionists, saw plainly that Resistance to Tyrants, Rebels, and Slaveholders was good & necessary; they saw that, on the moral plane where this nation and the world stand, no higher resistance than physical resistance was possible, for no other was accepted or understood. So the question was - Shall it be Resistance or Submission? What would you have had them say, dear Mr Webb? How wd James Haughton have had them decide that question? - Thankful am I, that Garrison, Wright, C K. Whipple, & others, were not so bereft of their reason, as to take a stand which (you may be sure) would have been to all intents & purposes by the side of Jeff. Davis and his man-selling, man-stealing compeers. — So it clearly appears to us. And you, dear Mr W., were you here, would I fully believe have many things cleared up to yr. mind, from the daily accruing evidence, which now seem difficult to you, - however plain to us. There never was so much Antislavery

in the country as there is at this hour; and
never were the proofs of the influence, heretofore
exerted by the Abolitionists, more palpable than
Our Government is behind the people, but the pe
are crowding it on; events are crowding it on;
influential men are rapidly taking the Emancipation
ground. Witness the late Report of the Secretary of Wa
Gov. Cameron; witness the able Address of Ex-Senato
Dickinson, one of the leading Democrats of the North; wit
the still abler address of Ex. Gov. Boutwell of Massachus
formerly a Democrat, now a leading Republican, gi
last Mond. eve. in Boston (which I had the pleasure of
hearing) and which I am glad to see printed in ful
to-day's Liberator (Dec. 20th) Though long, I would ask
a favour that you read it; for I think its straigh
forward, plain, common-sense will suit you, eve
where you may not be ready to adopt his conclusio
(as well as J. Haughton, E. Meghan, &c.)
You think us, I understand, inconsistent & not true
in regard to our old position of "No Union with Slaveholders",
because now we sustain the War for the Union. There is
just the point where you misunderstand us, & where you
would, I am confident, see differently, if you were here
Never was a greater mistake made, in the case, than to
suppose there is any change in our position. Do we not
see & know that this War is prodigiously weakening the Sla
System, - the hold of the Master on the Slave? Has it not alre
broken up that relation in thousands of cases? perhaps in te
of thousands? Do we not see that the old Union never can
restored? Is it the old Union - or any Union with Slaveholde
that we desire? Certainly not. Why should you or Elizu
Meghan, or any friends of ours, think it for a moment
We labour straight on for weakening, crippling, destroyi
the Slaveholders' power. This was, we know, is doing the te
first; and it shall not be our fault, if it do not accomp
the last. But, I must say, it is dreadful hard to be labouri
arouse & urge forward our own Govt., and at the same time to ri
the doubts & distrusts of our friends abroad, - and also to find
whole weight (nearly) of England, political & moral, cast in the scale against us,

Tuesday, Dec. 24, I wrote on, last Friday, until it was too late to get the letter in season for Saturday's mail from New York. — As I now read it over, I see that you may suspect me of warmth over much; but, you know, it is my way to speak & write earnestly, when strongly moved, and you will not, I hope & trust, put any other construction on what I have written. Since I wrote it, we have had 3 arrivals from England, — all bringing accounts of extensive naval and military preparations in England, troops & armament getting ready for Canada; — & in Canada itself, the Government ~~people~~ paper calling the people to arms, & the Govt. itself calling out a large force of the Militia. Does this mean less than a purpose to have a War with America, if it can be had? Without waiting to know the purpose or position of our Government, all these various menaces are held out over us, — and at what a time!! — Unless the tenor of the English despatches (of which, as yet, we know nothing positively), and the tone of the Eng. Government, towards us, prove far more considerate & fair than we now have reason to apprehend, the good feeling which universally prevailed through our Northern States amongst the intelligent and solid classes towards England will be utterly alienated, and a nation of friends and well-wishers deeply embittered. As I said before, England in alliance with the Slave-holding States, may set them up, and set us down temporarily; but what else will England set up

when she takes the Seceding & Rebellious States into her favour? That is for her to answer, and for the world to see. Will She make the abolition of Slavery there a condition of her alliance? Who can suppose it, after the way in which She regards Slidell & Mason, as refugees entitled to an asylum; - (they, & all the South, would spurn such an idea); after the way in which Yancey (was he asking an asylum?) was received in London; after the revelation we have of the lengths to which the manufacturers & merchants are ready to go to obtain Southern Cotton; after all the proofs we have of English sympathy with the Rebellion?

As I am in such a critical vein, bear with me while I say a word about your article in the Dec. "Advocate" - (an excellent number it is, and I wish every impartial person in the United Kingdom cd. read the Tribune's exposure of the N.Y. Herald, and the acct. of the Pennsylvania meeting, with Garrison's "Statement", as adopted there). You attribute the "prostration" so prevalent in England to the Americans themselves. Pray tell us how these Slaveholding Americans came to have the welcome they did, the access to Sources of influence, the entree to "select & exclusive circles of English Society"? Why did they receive it, and the American Abolitionists, & their English friends, get nothing of the sort? Why the prevailing coldness and indifference to the latter, the warmth & cordiality

to the former? No, dear friend Webb, believe it, that you are mistaken there. Indeed, the fact itself, as you state it, is proof positive of an antecedent condition of things, in English circles of influence & wealth, - without which, and in a better state of things, there cd. have been no possibility of Slaveholders and Slavery upholders being received (as they were) as honest men, as gentlemen, & as Christians, - and Antislavery men turned off with coldness, suspicion, & absolute hostility, - every Slaveholders' lie about them accepted readily, & believed extensively. Surely you pay anything but a compliment, either to the intelligence or to the moral perceptions of Englishmen, when you suppose them to have been influenced & persuaded by these Slaveholders to believe their wily allegations about our country, or about the working of Emancipation in W.I. What any impartial hearer would have scented and rejected at once, as the evidence of an interested person, of an accomplice in the villainy, of one whose evil cause would naturally dispose him to falsify established facts, & disparage as far as possible the better policy of England, & misrepresenting it as a failure and mistake throughout, - this, & more, has been, by your own showing, accepted readily in England, and believed; when the antislavery side has labored & struggled in vain for a hearing. Bad as we are, there is too much proof that we have had, in our Slaveholding as a Nation, great countenance, encouragement, and support from English wealth, English Society, English religion,

and English visitors to our country. What a lo
of authors & others, of clerical representatives of
English Sects, have come, and seen, & returned to
apologise for, & excuse Slavery, and to continue
fast in the bonds of a profitable trade and of a
mutual "religious" faith! The truth, & the awful fa
is, that we have, nationally & mutually, countenan
and sustained each other in the great wrong, one side
doing it, the other excusing, apologising, justifying, an
like your "barrister" friend, representing it as absolutely
necessary & good, & the idea of removing it the great
absurdity. — Your censures of the Fishmongers C.
in the latter part of your article, seem to me to come
queerly, after the premises in the former part. — All
say of the F. Co., I cordially respond to. It is a good, whol
some antislavery castigation, which they richly deserve
the villains, the contemptible, selfish, wretches, no matt
what of "nobility" or of wealth may have sat there and
cheered those stupendous lies & brazen pretensions of
Yancey & the
But you hold those Englishmen accountable in this case;
why excuse any Englishmen for believing & receiving th
American Slaveholders at any time. To suppose then
influenced and convinced by these American advocates of "the sum of
all villainies" is to suppose them incapable of reason
or destitute of conscience & heart. — Well! God h
& save us! How we are to come out of this "fratricidal" w
(as even George Thompson calls it, !!!) I do not see.
Of this I am sure, that this War could not have been won
by the North, without our stepping deeper & lower into those
degrading & damning humiliations, for which the Antislave
sentiment of the world has so long & so justly condemned us. To
as war is, it is not so bad as that chronic state of war, viol
bloodshed, licentiousness, & all conceivable impurity & atheis
which preceded it, and which it is certainly undermining.
the tempest, lightning, & thunder have done their sharp, bitter work,
the good Father will (let us hope & believe) give us peace
true peace, on a just & so enduring basis.

I hope you will read Conway's "Rejected Stone", wh. I sent in the box

with best love to yourself & to Reuben - & kindest regard to all your family.
Ever & truly yours
Wm. Lloyd Garrison